

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7683

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1721

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, MA, FR, UR

SUBJECT: FRENCH AND SOVIET ECONOMIC MISSIONS VISIT MADAGASCAR

REF: TANANARIVE A-060 OF AUGUST 7, 1975

1. FRENCH "PLANNING MISSION" HEADED BY JEAN AUDIBERT, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMING IN MINISTRY OF COOPERATION, VISITED MADAGASCAR OCTOBER 6 - 11 TO REVIEW FUTURE BILATERAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. ON DEPARTURE AUDIBERT SAID FUTURE FRENCH AID WOULD BE CONCENTRATED IN THREE AREAS: STUDIES FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, STRENGTHENING OF MALAGASY PUBLIC SERVICES, CIVILIAN AND MILITARY, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. HE ADDED THAT MISSION'S VISITS WITH MALAGASY OFFICIALS HAD BEEN "VERY POSITIVE," AND THAT CURRENT FRENCH AID TO MADAGASCAR TOTALS APPROXIMATELY \$22 MILLION. (THIS FIGURE PRESUMABLY INCLUDES FRENCH SHARE OF EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND AID, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, PENSIONS, AND OTHER FRENCH DIRECT TRANSFER PAYMENTS.)

2. SOVIET ECONOMIC MISSION, REPORTED TO BE ADVANCE TEAM FOR HIGHER LEVEL MISSION TO BE HEADED BY RUSSIAN CHIEF OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS FOR AFRICA, ARRIVED IN
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TANANARIVE OCTOBER 11. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS,

INITIAL SOVIET MISSION CONTAINS TECHNICIANS SPECIALIZED IN EXPORT OF AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, EXPORT OF INDUSTRIAL RAW MATERIALS, AND COMMUNICATIONS. SPOKESMAN FOR MISSION REPORTED TO PRESS HIS GROUP HAS COME TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR FORMAL BILATERAL ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS TO BE SIGNED SOON BETWEEN USSR AND MADAGASCAR.

3. TO ROUND OFF VISITORS, A SPECIAL WORLD BANK MISSION HAS BEEN IN MADAGASCAR THE PAST TEN DAYS OR SO, MAINLY REVIEWING SEVERAL BANK-FINANCED PROJECTS ALREADY UNDERWAY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. REPORTEDLY MISSION IS ALSO EVALUATING GENERAL PROGRESS OF BANK ACTIVITY IN MADAGASCAR AND OUTLINE OF FUTURE PROGRAM.

4. COMMENT: FRENCH PLANNING MISSION IS OUTGROWTH OF VISIT OF FRENCH MINISTER OF COOPERATION TO TANANARIVE THIS PAST JULY. FROM PUBLIC REPORTS ON RESULTS OF FRENCH MISSION'S VISIT, IT WOULD APPEAR THE FRENCH ARE NOT ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE ANY MAJOR NEW AID ACTIVITIES IN MADAGASCAR, OR DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AS REQUESTED BY GOMR (REFAIR). "STUDIES" FOR PLANS OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (WITH NO PROMISE OF FINANCING) AND CONTINUED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MALAGASY PUBLIC SERVICES ARE SMALL BEER COMPARED TO SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL AID FRENCH SOURCES REPORT THAT PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA ORIGINALLY REQUESTED. DE SANTILLANA

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